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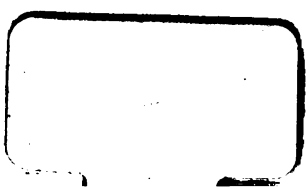

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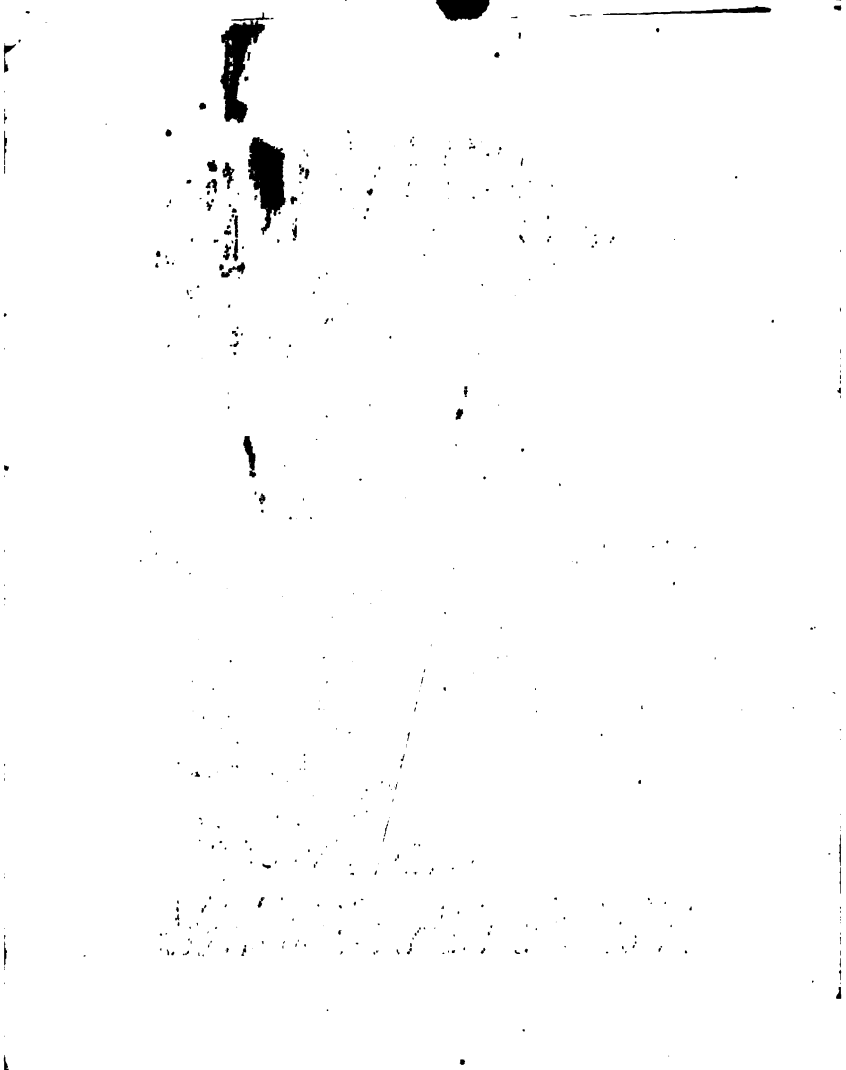

MINNIE'S PET PONY.

MINNIE'S PET HORSE.

BY

MRS. MADELINE LESLIE,

AUTHOR OF "THE LESLIE STORIES," "TIM, THE SCISSORS-GRINDER," ETC.

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ELECTROTYPED AT THE
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TO MY YOUNG FRIEND,

HENRY FOWLE DURANT, JR.

These Little Volumes

ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR,

IN THE EARNEST HOPE THAT THEY MAY INCREASE IN HIM THAT LOVE OF NATURE AND OF RURAL LIFE WHICH HAS EVER EXERTED SO SALUTARY AN INFLUENCE IN THE FORMATION OF THE CHARACTERS OF THE WISE AND GOOD.

49 Y 7

MINNIE AND HER PETS.

Minnie's Pet Parrot.

Minnie's Pet Cat.

Minnie's Pet Dog.

Minnie's Pet Horse.

Minnie's Pet Lamb.

Minnie's Pet Monkey.

MINNIE'S PET HORSE.

CHAPTER I.

THE HORSE AND THE DOG.

In the other books of this little series, I have told you about Minnie's pet parrot, her pet cat, and her pet dog. In this one, I shall give you an account of her pet pony, and also tell you anecdotes of other horses.

Star was the name she gave her Shetland pony, I suppose because he had a white star on his forehead, which showed very distinctly from the contrast with his dark bay hair.

He was about three feet high, with a short neck and a long black tail. He was very affectionate and gentle, loving his little mistress, and neighing pleasantly whenever he heard her voice.

The little girl seldom went out to the stable without asking the cook for a piece of bread for Star. Sometimes she did not give it to him at once, but hid it under her apron. The pony soon learned this trick, and, if the bread was not forthcoming, lifted the apron with his teeth, whining like a child, until she put it in his mouth.

During the summer months, Star was kept in the pasture,

where the grass was very green. When he was thirsty, there was a clear, running brook at the end of the pasture, where he could go and drink. If the weather was very hot, he liked to go and stand in the water and cool himself.

Star had a companion to stay with him in the pasture, and help him eat the young, sweet clover. This was Nannie, the lamb, who never, if she could

help it, was out of his sight for a moment. Wherever Star went, Nannie tried to go too; or, if she could not, she bleated continually, refusing to eat until his return.

Mr. Lee's place contained near a hundred acres. There was a farm house about two hundred rods from the mansion, and a nicely gravelled road leading past the lawn through the garden, connecting them.

Here, almost every pleasant

morning, Minnie could be seen trotting her little pony back and forth, and Nannie running along by his side. After a few months, Star became so well accustomed to his young mistress, that he would walk by himself from the stable door, when the groom had buckled on the saddle, to the bottom of the stone steps where she used to mount. Her father soon taught her to put her foot in the stirrup, and mount by herself;

and Star would stand quite still, turning his head to see when she was ready; then, when she tightened the reins, and said in her pleasant tones, "Come, pony!" away he would go down the avenue, trotting or cantering, just as suited her best.

As Minnie grew older, her mother sometimes trusted her to go to the village store of an errand; or, if the servants were busy, and there was a letter to

be posted, there was nothing easier than for Minnie to run to the gate leading into the pasture, and call out, "Star! Star!!" Then he would come up to the house, following her like a dog, and wait to be saddled.

In the winter the pony occupied a stall in the neat, warm stable; and there, curled down by his side, Nannie lay too, doing her best to keep her favorite warm with her long fleece.

Minnie thought Star a very knowing horse, and she loved to tell her father and mother all the cunning things he did, and how glad he always was to see her, when she went to visit him.

Sometimes her father told her stories of other ponies. I suppose you would like to hear some, and I will tell them to you.

"The first was an account of a horse owned by Dr. Smith, in Ireland. He was a beautiful

hackney, and although extremely spirited, was at the same time wonderfully docile.

"The doctor had also a fine Newfoundland dog, named Cæsar. These animals were mutually attached, and seemed perfectly acquainted with each other's actions. The dog was always kept in the stable at night, and universally lay beside the horse.

"When Dr. Smith practised in Dublin, he visited his patients

on horseback, and had no other servant to take care of his horse while in their houses but Cæsar, into whose mouth he put the reins. The hackney stood very quietly, even in that crowded city, beside his friend Cæsar. When it happened that the doctor had a patient not far distant from the place where he paid his last visit, he did not think it worth while to remount, but called to his horse and Cæsar

to follow him. They both readily obeyed, and remained quietly opposite the door where he entered until he came out again.

"While he remained in Queen's county, he had many opportunities of witnessing the friendship and sagacity of these intelligent animals. The horse seemed to be as implicitly obedient to his friend Cæsar, as he could possibly be to his groom.

"The doctor would go to the

stable, accompanied by his dog, put the bridle on his horse, and giving the reins to Cæsar, bid him take the horse to the water. They both understood what was to be done, when off trotted Cæsar, followed by the hackney, which frisked, capered, and played with the dog all the way to the rivulet, about three hundred yards distant from the stable. He followed at a great distance, always keeping so far in the

rear as to observe their manœuvres. They invariably went to the stream, and after the horse had quenched his thirst, both returned in the same playful manner as they had gone out.

"Sometimes the doctor desired Cæsar to make the horse leap the stream, which was about six feet broad. The dog, by a kind of bark, and leaping up toward the horse's head, intimated to him what he wanted,

which was quickly understood, when he cantered off, and took the leap in a neat and regular style. On one occasion, Cæsar lost hold of the reins, and as soon as the horse cleared the leap, he immediately trotted up to his canine friend, who took hold of the bridle, and led him back through the water quietly."

"They loved each other," cried Minnie, "just like Star and Nannie."

"Such attachments are not uncommon," rejoined Mr. Lee.

"Many horses will not stay a moment in the stable by themselves, without discovering a great deal of impatience.

"Sometimes they try to break the manger with their fore feet. On one occasion a pony leaped out of a stable door through which manure was thrown, after company which was in the barn yard. A cow, a goat, or

a pet lamb, will perfectly satisfy them."

"A gentleman in Bristol had a greyhound which slept in the stable along with a fine hunter about five years of age. They soon became attached, and regarded each other with the most tender affection. Indeed, the horse was restless and unhappy when the dog was out of sight.

"The gentleman used frequently to call at the stable for

the greyhound to accompany him in his walks. On such occasions the horse would look over his shoulder at the dog with much anxiety, and neigh in a manner which plainly said, 'Let me also accompany you.'

"When the dog returned to the stable, he was always welcomed with a loud neigh, and ran up to the horse, licking his nose. In return, the horse would scratch the dog's back with his teeth.

"One day, when the groom was out with the horse and greyhound for exercise, a large dog attacked the latter, and quickly bore him to the ground. In spite of all the efforts of the groom, the horse threw back his ears, rushed at the strange dog, seized him by the back with his teeth, and shook him till a large piece of the skin gave way. The offender no sooner got on his feet than he ran off as fast as possible."

CHAPTER II.

HORSE GOING TO CHURCH.

When Minnie was in her ninth year, her father's brother and wife made them a visit. This gentleman was exceedingly fond of horses, and a good judge of their excellences.

Minnie was eager to exhibit her pony, and invited her uncle to the stable for that purpose.

When they went to that part

of the building where his stall was, the lamb was quietly feeding by the side of her friend; but as soon as she heard a strange voice, she ran under the pony for protection, and popped her head out between his hind feet.

The gentleman laughed heartily at their strange appearance, but after a careful examination of her pet, told her she might well be proud of him, as he had very good points, and was

in every way a capital little fellow.

"You must make the most of your uncle Harry," exclaimed her father merrily. "He is an inveterate story-teller, and can give you any amount of information about horses, ponies, &c."

"O, I'm so glad!" cried Minnie, laughing and clapping her hands. "I love to hear stories so dearly!"

"I'm going to try the black

mare," said the gentleman. "What do you say to riding with me on the pony?"

"May I, mamma? Please let me," urged the child.

"I have not the slightest objection; my dear."

"Come, then, and I will tell you stories to your heart's content."

They were soon on their way, when, after giving her a few hints about holding her reins, he began:—

"There was once a pony mare which had a young colt. They were put to graze in a field adjoining the River Severn, where there was rich pasturage. One day the pony made its appearance before the gentleman's house to whom she belonged, and, by clattering with her feet and other gestures, drew his attention. A person being sent out, she immediately galloped off through various gates all broken down,

occasionally glancing back to be sure she was followed.

"They soon came to a field, through which she passed directly for a spot in the river, over which she hung with a mournful look, and there the colt was found drowned."

"O, how sorry she must have been!" exclaimed Minnie. "I suppose she thought her master could bring the colt to life again."

"I'll tell you another, and a more lively story," said uncle Harry, smiling.

"A noble gentleman in France, called Monsieur de Boussanelle, captain of cavalry in the royal regiment, tells about a horse belonging to his company, which was disabled by age from eating his hay or oats. This horse was fed for two months by a couple of his companions on his right and left, who ate

with him. Perceiving his infirmity, they drew the hay out of his rack, chewed it, and then put it before their aged comrade. They prepared his oats for him in the same way."

"I like those horses, they were so kind," urged Minnie. "I hope, uncle, you have a great many stories as good as that."

The gentleman smiled archly, and then proceeded.

"The island of Krutsand,

which is formed by two branches of the Elbe, is frequently laid under water, during the time of the spring tides. In the early part of the year 1794, the water one day rose so rapidly that the horses, which were grazing in the plain with their colts, suddenly found themselves standing in deep water; upon which they all set up a loud neighing, and collected themselves as closely together as possible.

"They now seemed to consult together what measures to take to save the colts, that were standing up to the belly in the flood, and soon determined upon a singular course, when some old mares, which had no colts, assisted them in carrying it out.

"The method they adopted was this: Every two horses took a colt between them, and pressing their sides together, kept it wedged in and lifted

quite above the surface of the water.

"All the horned cattle in the vicinity had already set themselves afloat, and were swimming in regular columns toward their homes. But these noble mares, with wonderful perseverance, remained immovable under their cherished burden for the space of six hours, till, the tide ebbing, the water subsided, and the colts were out of danger."

"The inhabitants, who had rowed to the place in boats, viewed with delight this singular manœuvre, whereby their valuable colts were saved from destruction."

"How very curious!" exclaimed Minnie, gravely; "but I don't see how they could get the colts up in their places without some one to lift them."

The gentleman laughed as he assured her that mares who were

intelligent enough to make such a plan could easily manage that part. "Do you suppose," he asked, "that your pony understands any thing you say to him more than the tones of your voice?"

"O, no, uncle!"

"And yet," he said, "a true blood horse, when at liberty, when two or more persons are conversing, will approach and seem to listen to the conversa-

tion. Even the common farm horse is quite obedient to the call of his own name, and will not stir, when desired to stand, until his own name is pronounced.

"They have a kind of reason, too. I have seen a horse who, in ploughing, would walk very steadily toward the directing pole, and halt when his head had reached it. I knew of another horse who seemed to have a just

idea of time, and calculated it so correctly, that he always neighed about ten minutes before the time of ceasing work, whether in summer or winter."

"I don't see how he could do that, uncle Harry."

"Horses are very susceptible to music," he went on. "I owned a horse once who would stop eating, and listen attentively with pricked, moving ears, and steady eyes, the instant he heard

the note low G; and I knew of another that was similarly affected by a high note."

Minnie laughed, as she said, "I mean to try my pony just as soon as I get home."

"I dare say, if you were to take your accordeon to the stable, he would be delighted. I have watched many of these noble animals on the military field, and there is no doubt they are pleased with martial music.

"I remember hearing of an experiment made in the year 1829, on some of the Duke of Buckleuch's hunters. A gentleman went toward them in the field, but they were shy of his approach, as he was a stranger, and slowly retreated, till he sounded a small musical instrument, called a mouth Æolian harp. On hearing this, they immediately erected their heads and turned round. On his

sounding it again, they approached nearer, when he began to retreat, and they to advance. Having gone over a paling, one of the horses came up to him, putting its mouth close to his breast, seeming delighted with the music which he continued to produce. As the other horses were coming up, apparently to follow the example of their more confident comrade, the gentleman retired.

"As you like stories so well," he added, archly, "I must tell you about the first horse I ever owned. My brother Frank gave him to me before he went to sea, and a splendid fellow he was, too. He was a perfect mouse color, with an arching neck, and a handsome, black, flowing mane. I was living at home then, and we always used him to carry us to church.

"I believe Duke knew as well

as I did when Sunday came, for he regularly walked up from the pasture where he was grazing, in time to be harnessed, though he never did this any other day. Once it happened that father and mother were both ill, so that none of us went to church; but at the usual time Duke came trotting to the door, where he stood for a few minutes neighing frequently and looking anxiously toward the house, and then trot-

ted off a mile and a half to church by himself. Several persons saw him going up into the yard, and walking demurely into the shed while the bell was ringing, and there he stood quietly until the service was through, when he came home again, just as I was going out to find him."

CHAPTER III.

STAR DANCING TO MUSIC.

"O, MAMMA," cried Minnie, "I have had a beautiful time. Uncle Harry is such a good teacher! And then he tells me such nice stories!"

Her cheeks rivalled the rose, and her eyes were sparkling with animation, as she said this, while her uncle, who, unobserved by her, had followed into the

parlor, said, laughingly, "I have seldom found so good a listener. I have enjoyed the ride myself exceedingly. Come here, Minnie, and I will relate to you an amusing anecdote which I read a short time ago.

"In Persia, where they have splendid horses, all persons of the least distinction ride on horseback, and scarcely any one will deign to go the shortest distance on foot. The anecdote is

related by a celebrated pomologist, concerning a horse employed in his nurseries for over fifteen years. His name was Old Charley. I was so much interested in the account of his sagacity, that I went to see him. The good animal was used for ploughing between lines of trees from three feet and a half to four feet apart, and moved with such precision and care as to run the plough and cultivator

as near as possible to the trees, without ever hitting or injuring one of them. His owner told me Old Charley would go straight between the lines, turning at the end without any motion or word from the driver, with as much accuracy and skill as any human being could display, and without stepping over, or entangling his feet in, the traces in any manner whatever.

After dinner, Minnie, in com-

STAR DANCING TO MUSIC. Page 53.

pany with her mother and their visitors, went to the stable to try the effect of music on her favorite. She had scarcely struck a note, when he stopped eating, and began to move his feet rapidly, as if he were trying to dance.

Even the gentleman was surprised at this display, and declared that the pony must have been trained to do this by his former owner, while Minnie be-

came so much excited that she could scarcely control herself.

Mr. Henry Lee took the instrument himself, and found that the horse really had an idea of time, as the faster he played, the quicker were the pony's movements. As soon as he stopped, the animal quietly went on munching his oats.

When her father returned from the city, Minnie ran to meet him, and relate the wonderful

feats of her pet. To gratify her, he walked to the stable to see the operation repeated.

"Music has a wonderful influence on horses," he remarked, as they were returning to the house, "especially martial music."

"Do you remember the case of the old war-horse, Solus?" inquired his brother.

"Yes; and Minnie would like to hear it."

The gentleman playfully pat-

ted her head, as he related the following anecdote: —

"Many years ago, an assistant of the contractors on a new turnpike used to ride to the field of labor a horse which had long carried a field officer, and who, though aged, still possessed a good deal of spirit. One day he was passing a large town where volunteers were at drill, on the Common. The moment Solus heard the drum, he leaped

the fence, and was speedily at his old post, heading the drill, occupied by the commanding officer on parade.

"The young rider, dreadfully mortified, could not induce the horse to leave his honorable position till the volunteers left for the town; but, to the great amusement of the bystanders, headed all their manœuvres, prancing in true military style, as well as his stiffened limbs

would allow him, much to the annoyance of the assistant, who did not feel very highly honored by Solus making a colonel of him against his will."

The company all laughed at this story, which Mrs. Lee said reminded her of the effects of a trumpet on some captured horses, of which she had read.

"It seems," she went on, "that in the early part of this century, the Tyrolese captured fifteen

horses belonging to the Bavarian troops sent against them, and mounted them with fifteen of their own men, in order to go out again against the same troops. But no sooner did these horses hear the sound of their own trumpet, and recognize the uniform of their old friends, than they dashed forward at full speed, and, in spite of all the efforts of their riders, bore them into the ranks, and delivered

them up as prisoners to the Bavarians."

"That was rather a mortifying defeat," suggested uncle Harry, "and only proves my theory correct, that horses are very susceptible to kind treatment, and have a wonderful memory, often recognizing their old masters after a separation of years."

"Harry, do you remember father's old black horse?" asked his brother.

"Of course I do; and the mile I ran for the doctor, when she snuffed that long brier up into her nose. I never saw father more alarmed. After he pulled the brier out, there was a whole pailful of blood, which frightened old Blackey so much that they were obliged to blindfold her.

"Poor creature! her afflictions followed thick and fast, for she had scarcely recovered from

this, when the plank floor gave way in the stable, and she broke her leg.

"Father hated to part with her, but at last gave her to a man to use on his farm, who he knew would treat her kindly. He did not see her again for three years; but as soon as she heard his voice, when he was walking toward her in the pasture, she came quickly toward him, neighing with pleasure, and

put ner head lovingly on his shoulder. Then she turned round and looked at her colt, as if she wanted to introduce them."

"She was a splendid animal in her prime," rejoined Mr. Lee. "I have heard father say that she would travel off hour after hour, ten miles to the hour, without the spur or the whip; indeed, I never knew him to use the whip but once. Somehow,

she got a habit of not standing quietly while he was getting into the chaise and preparing to start. One day she was unusually restive, when he told the man to go to the barn and bring a whip.

"Blackey knew what it meant, and, before a blow was struck, trembled from head to foot. Father cut across the back two smart blows, which proved so effectual a cure that she never troubled him afterward."

"There is no animal more susceptible to kind treatment," remarked uncle Harry. "I imagine half the obstinacy and unruly conduct of some horses is the result of cruelty and mismanagement. I can recall to mind at this moment a sad illustration of the latter course.

"A man near Boston used to catch his horse by taking to the field a quantity of corn in a measure. On calling to him,

the horse would come up and eat the corn, while the bridle was put over his head. But the owner having deceived the animal several times by holding out the measure when it had no corn in it, the animal at length began to suspect the design. Coming up one day as usual, he looked into the measure, and finding it empty, turned round, reared on his hind legs, and, striking with his fore feet, killed his master."

"That was indeed a fearful punishment for his deception," returned Mrs. Lee. "It reminds me of an anecdote I read lately, of a horse belonging to an Irish nobleman, who became restive and furious whenever a certain individual came into its presence.

"One day, when this poor fellow happened to pass within its reach, the animal seized him with its teeth, and broke his arm. It then threw him

down, and lay on him, when, every effort to get it off proving ineffectual, they were compelled to shoot it. Afterward the fact was discovered that the man had performed a cruel operation on the horse some time before, which it had never forgiven."

"I know," responded her husband, "that such cases have occurred, showing a spirit of revenge on the part of the animal; but I believe them to be

rare, compared to the instances of gratitude for kindness.

"Professor Kruger, of Halle, relates a pleasing incident of this character. 'A friend of mine,' he says, 'was one dark night riding home through a wood, and had the misfortune to strike his head against the branch of a tree, and fell from his horse, stunned by the blow. The animal, who was greatly attached to his master, immediately re-

turned to the house which they had left, about a mile distant. He found the door closed, and the family gone to bed. He pawed at the door, till one of them, hearing the noise, arose and opened it, and, to his surprise, saw the horse of his friend.

"'No sooner was the door opened, than the horse turned round, and led the man directly to the spot where his master lay in a fainting fit.'"

CHAPTER IV.

HORSE GOING TO A DOCTOR.

"ANOTHER instance of the same kind is related of a horse belonging to a carter in Fifeshire. From the carter having a large family, this animal had become particularly intimate with children, and fond of them, so that he would not, on any account, move when they were playing among his feet.

"One day, when he was dragging a loaded cart through a narrow lane near the village, a young child happened to be playing in the road, and would inevitably have been crushed by the wheels, had it not been for the kindness of the animal. He carefully took it by the clothes with his teeth, carried it for a few yards, and then placed it on a bank by the wayside, moving slowly all the while, and looking

back, as if to satisfy himself that the wheels of the cart had cleared it."

"The effect of kind treatment," rejoined his brother, smiling at Minnie's delight, "was particularly manifest by a horse belonging to a gentleman in England, called Colonel Smith. The charger had belonged to him for two years, and became greatly attached to him; but he was at last obliged to leave it

with the army, though it was subsequently sold and carried back to London. About three years after, Colonel Smith chanced to travel to London by the mail coach, and while they were changing horses, the off side one attracted his attention. Going near, the affectionate animal at once recognized him, testifying its satisfaction by rubbing its head against his clothes, and making every moment a

little stamp with his fore feet, till the coachman asked, 'Are you not an old acquaintance, sir?'

"The same gentleman says there was a most beautiful and powerful charger belonging to a friend of his, then a captain in the fourteenth dragoons, which was bought by him in Ireland, at a low price, on account of his viciousness, which had cost the life of one or two grooms. The captain was a celebrated rider,

not to be thrown by the most violent efforts, and of a temper so gentle and patient that he could effect a cure if vice were curable.

"After some very dangerous combats with his horse, the animal was subdued, and became so attached that his master could walk any where, with him following like a dog, and even ladies could mount him with perfect safety. He rode him

during several campaigns in Spain, and on one occasion, when, in action, horse and rider came headlong to the ground, the animal, making an effort to spring up, placed his fore foot on the captain's breast, but, immediately withdrawing it, rose without hurting him, or moving till he was remounted."

A few days later, and while his brother and wife were still visiting them, Mr. Lee invited

some of his city friends to come out and make their acquaintance. They were all seated at dinner when they heard Leo barking in a manner to express great joy. As the noise continued, Mrs. Lee allowed Minnie to see what occasioned the rejoicing.

When she reached the door, she saw a gentleman mounted on a handsome gray horse, near the stable door, talking to Leo. There was something about him

which riveted her attention, and presently, with a joyful cry, she ran forward to welcome uncle Frank, who had just come into port after a long voyage.

In answer to his inquiries for her father and mother, she led him in triumph to the dining hall, where a scene of excitement and pleasure ensued.

Captain Frank Lee was a fine, noble-hearted son of Neptune. Having chosen the sea early in

life, he had followed it for many years, rising step by step until he reached his present honorable position. He had become rich, too, as well as his brother, each being benefited by a kind of partnership existing between them; for, while the captain sailed to foreign ports, the merchant supplied the money to freight the vessel, which they owned in equal shares, and to buy goods at a foreign market.

When he had answered some of the numerous questions which were crowded upon him, such as, "How did you come?" "When did you arrive in port?" "Is Louise well?" &c., &c., the captain begged them to reseat themselves at table, adding, "I am as hungry as a bear, and long for some of the home luxuries with which I see your table is spread."

"Well, Minnie," he exclaimed,

pinching her cheek, when he had thrice emptied his plate, "I'll not forget that you were the first one to welcome me; and, by the way, how is Jacko? and how are all the rest of your pets?"

"You had better not name the subject of pets," cried uncle Harry, laughing, "unless you are willing te be pinned to a chair and tell stories — 'yarns,' I think you call them — for the next five hours. Now, it's cats or dogs;

then, it's monkeys or parrots; yesterday, it was horses; and you must rake up your memory for all the stories, true, veritable facts, that you ever heard in your life."

'I know, I know," answered the captain, drawing the child toward him, and kissing her as well as his long, thick beard would allow. "Minnie and I are old cronies, and understand each other's crotchets pretty

well. She's the little puss who threw down a beautiful bracelet I had purchased for her in Paris, and said, 'Uncle Frank, I don't care for presents unless they're alive.' So, the next voyage, I brought her a live present, in the shape of a grinning monkey, with which she was greatly delighted."

A roar of laughter from the company followed; but while they were eating the fruit, Min-

nie found an opportunity to whisper, —

"You can't think, uncle, what funny things my pony does. He knows how to dance beautifully."

"I should admire to see him," returned the captain, glancing roguishly toward his sister-in-law; "and you can't guess what I've brought for you this time."

"Alive, is it?"

"Yes; alive and squealing when I left the vessel. You'll

see it, or them, to-morrow, and I hope you'll be as pleased as you were with Jacko."

After dinner, the party adjourned to the piazza, when the captain said, "Leo, good fellow, knew me at once, in spite of my heavy beard; but he looked rather shy at my new horse; and, by the way, Prince is well worth showing. I brought him in the ship with me from England, and I wouldn't take a thou-

sand dollars for him, if that sum were offered me to-day."

"Let's go and see him!" exclaimed Mr. Harry Lee. "You were always a good judge of horseflesh, Frank."

After the animal had gone through a thorough examination of his qualities for the carriage, the saddle, &c., and the different gentlemen had given their opinion of his various excellences, the conversation turned, to Min-

nie's delight, on horses in general, and many anecdotes were related of their bravery, their fidelity to their masters' interests, their sagacity and memory, some of which I shall repeat in this and the next chapters."

"An instance of the latter trait, combined with reason," said Mr. Harry Lee, "is well authenticated.

"A cart horse, owned by Mr. Leggat, of Glasgow, had been

several times afflicted with disease, and as often cured by Mr. Downie, farrier there. He had not, however, been troubled for a long time; but on a recurrence of the disorder, he happened one morning to be employed in College Street, a distance of nearly a mile from Mr. Downie's workshop. He was arranged in a row with other horses engaged in the same work; but when the carters were absent, he left the

range, and, unattended by any driver, went down High Street, along the Gallowgate, and up a narrow lane, where he stopped at the farrier's door.

"As neither Mr. Leggat nor any one appeared with the horse, it was surmised that he had been seized with his old complaint. Being unyoked from the cart, he lay down, and showed, by every means in his power, that he was in distress. He was again treat-

ed as usual, and sent home to his master, who by that time had persons in all directions in search for him."

CHAPTER V.

THE TRUMPETER'S HORSE.

"For Minnie's sake, I must tell some anecdotes about Shetland ponies," cried the captain, laughing, as he patted his niece under the chin. "The first one shows what a power of memory they have.

"A pony reared upon Drumchany, belonging to General Stewart, was once travelling from

Edinburgh to Perthshire, in company with several other gentlemen. They were advancing to the neighborhood of Drumchany when it suddenly grew dark, and they could not find the place to take the ford.

"At last, they concluded to trust to the pony's memory, and, giving him the reins, he trotted on cheerily, till, suddenly pausing and turning to the right, he trotted down a furrow through

a potato field, that led directly to the ford in question, which he crossed in the same decided manner, and piloted them safely all the rest of the way to their destination.

"During their stay, he got out of the stable one night, and was found next day pasturing among the mosses where he had been bred."

"I heard of a case very similar," rejoined Mr. Gordon, one

of the gentlemen who composed the party.

"A gentleman rode a young horse, which he had brought up, thirty miles from home, and to a part of the country where he had never been before. The road was a cross one, and extremely difficult to find; however, by dint of perseverance and inquiry, he at last reached his destination.

"Two years afterward, he had

occasion to go the same way, and was benighted four or five miles from the end of his journey. The night was so dark that he could scarcely see the horse's head. He had a dreary moor and common to pass, and had lost all traces of the proper direction he wished to take. The rain began to fall heavily. He now despaired of reaching the place.

"'Here am I,' said he to him-

self, 'far from any house, and in the midst of a dreary waste, where I know not which way to direct the course of my steed. I have heard much of the memory of the horse, and that is now my only hope.'

"He threw the reins on the horse's neck, and encouraging him to proceed, found himself safe at the gate of his friend in less than an hour. What made it more remarkable was the fact,

that the animal could not possibly have been over the road, except on the occasion two years before, as no person but his master ever rode him."

"You said you had another story of a Shetland pony, uncle Frank," whispered Minnie.

"So I have, dear. It was about a little girl, the daughter of a gentleman in Warwickshire. She was one day playing on the banks of a canal which runs

through her father's grounds, when she had the misfortune to fall in, and would in all probability have been drowned, had not a small pony, which had long been kept in the family, plunged into the stream, and brought the child safely ashore without the slightest injury."

"I think my pony would do that," exclaimed Minnie; "he loves me so well."

"That is to me one of their

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most interesting traits," added the captain. "They are capable of becoming so strongly attached to man, that they give up their own wishes to those of their master. Indeed, their interests become so identified with his, that they come to have no will of their own. I have myself seen an old Shetland pony, which would place its fore foot in the hand of its young master like a dog, thrust its head under his

arm to be caressed, and join with him and a little terrier in all their noisy rompings on the lawn. The same animal daily bore its young master to school; and, though its heels and teeth were ready for every other urchin, yet so attached was it to this boy, that it would wait hours for him in his sports by the way, and even walk alone from the stable in town to the school room, which was fully

half a mile distant, and wait, saddled and bridled, for the afternoon's dismissal. Indeed, the young scapegrace did not deserve one tenth of this attention; for I have seen old 'Donald' toiling home with him at the gallop, to make up for time squandered at play."

Minnie's father then repeated to the gentleman many instances of her pony's attachment to her, and of his playfulness.

"I am of opinion," said Mr. Gordon, "that there are instances of attachment of a horse to his master equal to that shown by man to man.

"During the Peninsular war, the trumpeter of a French cavalry corps had a fine charger assigned to him, of which he became passionately fond, and which, by gentleness of disposition and uniform docility, showed the affection to be mutual.

"The sound of the trumpeter's voice, the sight of his uniform, or the clang of his trumpet, was sufficient to throw this animal into a state of excitement, and he appeared to be pleased and happy only when under the saddle of his rider. Indeed, he was unruly and useless to every body else; for once, on being removed to another part of the forces, and consigned to a young officer, he resolutely

refused to obey the commands of his rider. The first chance he had, he bolted straight to the trumpeter's station, and there took his stand, jostling alongside his former master.

"They were obliged to restore him to his old place, when he carried the trumpeter through many campaigns, and through many hair-breadth escapes.

"At last, the corps to which he belonged was defeated, and

in the confusion of retreat, the trumpeter was mortally wounded. Dropping from his horse, his body was found, many days after the engagement, stretched on the sward, with his faithful charger standing over it.

"During the long interval, it seems he had never quitted the trumpeter's side, but had stood sentinel over his corpse, scaring away the birds of prey, heedless of his own privations.

"When found, he was in a sadly reduced condition, partly from loss of blood through wounds, but chiefly from want of food, of which, in the excess of his grief, he could not be prevailed on to partake."

"A similar case of strong attachment happened under my immediate notice," remarked Mr. Lee, after a moment's silence. "General L. had a horse with him in camp of which he was

exceedingly fond, and to the training of which he had given particular attention. Every morning, at exactly eight o'clock, this horse came alone to the door of his tent, saddled for use, and stood there ready for his rider to mount. When the general appeared in his uniform, the affectionate animal welcomed him with a loud neigh of delight.

"At last, the noble officer received his death wound, and lay

for some days in his tent. It was affecting to see the horse walking up to the door as usual, and, when its master did not appear, to witness its look of anxious solicitude.

"When General L. died, he left his noble charger to the particular care of his wife, who was with him in his last moments. His remains were removed to ——, the horse being conveyed by the same train of cars, and

manifesting intense grief. On the day of the funeral, the body was carried to the church in which his family worshipped, the most touching tribute to his memory being this faithful animal, caparisoned in mourning, taking his station directly behind the corpse.

"It was not necessary for any one to lead him, for he somehow seemed to understand that his deceased master was in the

coffin; and nothing would induce him to leave it. For more than an hour, while the religious services lasted, he stood in front of the church, watching the door through which he had seen the corpse carried, waiting for it to come out, and then, without any command, wheeled into line, and followed directly behind it to the grave. What was very remarkable, as soon as the body was buried, he left the cemetery, fol-

lowing the coach containing the wife of his master."

"Your story," said the captain, "reminds me of a singular one I heard at sea.

"A farmer who lived in the neighborhood of Bedford, England, and regularly attended the markets there, was returning home one evening, and being somewhat tipsy, rolled off his saddle into the middle of the road. His horse stood still; but

after remaining patiently for some time, and not observing any disposition in the rider to get up and proceed further, he took him by the collar and shook him. This had little or no effect, for the farmer only gave a grumble of dissatisfaction at having his repose disturbed. The animal was not to be put off with any such evasion, and so applied his mouth to one of his master's coat laps, and after several at-

tempts, by dragging at it, to raise him upon his feet, the coat lap gave way.

"Three persons, who witnessed this extraordinary proceeding, then went up and assisted him in mounting his horse, putting the one coat lap into the pocket of the other, when he trotted off, and safely reached home. This horse is deservedly a favorite with his master, and engages in gambols with him like a dog."

"How old is your new horse, Frank?" inquired his brother George.

"Nine years. Just in his prime; and, with good care, will last for twenty years to come."

Mr. Gordon laughed. "Twenty years!" he repeated, incredulously.

"I think," answered the captain, "it a mistake to suppose a horse is not fit for service much after he is twelve or fourteen

years old. If he is used as he ought to be, and has good care, he will last well twenty, or even thirty years. The charger of Sir Ralph Abercrombie, which was wounded in the battle of Alexandria, afterwards died at Malta. On the stone erected there in commemoration of its services, the age of thirty-six is inscribed.

"And in 1790, there was alive near Haddington, in England, a

Shetland pony which had been in battle in 1745, whose age was forty-seven years."

"No doubt there are such cases," answered the gentleman, "but they are rare in this country. I suppose we give our horses too much to do."

"Yes, that is it; and too little care. No animal so richly repays the attention bestowed upon him as the horse."

CHAPTER VI.

THE BLIND HORSE.

The next day, Minnie was walking through the grounds with her uncle, while Tiney and Fidelle were following at her heels, when the express-man drove into the yard. He had a cage, as Minnie called it, in his wagon, and she ran eagerly to see what it contained. How great was her delight to see a

goat, and two cunning little kids, cuddling down on the hay at the bottom of the wagon!

When they were put into the stable, Minnie laughed and clapped her hands, and ran to summon all the family to come and see them.

Captain Lee's wife had accompanied him on this voyage, and had now gone to see her mother. Her husband had promised to meet her the next day, and after-

wards was coming with her to make them a longer visit.

Minnie obtained directions from him before he left, as to the diet and care of her new pets, and then, after making him promise to come back as quickly as possible, consented that he should go.

Her mother found her sitting quiet and sad, looking from the bay window in the parlor; for the captain was her favorite un-

cle, and she was greatly disappointed at his going so soon.

To comfort her, the lady took one of the books on natural history, and read some anecdotes to her, with a few of which I will close my book of Minnie's pet horse.

Here is an illustration of the force of habit in a blind horse. He ran on one of the stages of the great north road for many years, and so perfectly

was he acquainted with all the stables, halting places, and other matters, that he was never known to commit a blunder. He could never be driven past his own stable; and at the sound of the coming coach, he would turn out, of his own accord, into the stable yard. What was very remarkable, so accurate was his knowledge of time, that, though half a dozen coaches halted at the same inn, yet he was never

known to stir till the sound of the ten o'clock coach was heard in the distance.

"I think, after all," said Mrs. Lee, "that the docility of the horse is one of the most remarkable of its natural gifts. Here are some anecdotes that are very entertaining, in regard to their docility, or readiness to learn.

"Mr. Astley, of the Royal Amphitheatre, at Westminster Bridge, once had in his posses-

sion a remarkably fine Barbary horse, forty-three years of age, which was presented him by the Duke of Leeds. This celebrated animal officiated in the character of a waiter in the course of the performances at the amphitheatre, and at various other theatres in the United Kingdom.

"At the request of his master, he would ungirth his own saddle, wash his feet in a pail of water, and would bring into the riding

school a tea table and the dishes, which feat was usually followed up by fetching a chair, or stool, or whatever might be wanted. Last of all, he took a kettle of boiling water from a blazing fire, to the wonder and admiration of the spectators.

"Another gentleman had a horse which he taught to dance to music."

"Just like Star," shouted Minnie.

"Yes, dear; and at the command of his master he pretended to be lame, feigned death, lying motionless, with his limbs extended, and allowing himself to be dragged about till some words were pronounced, when he instantly sprang to his feet.

"In 1838, there was a wonderful horse presented to the public, who performed many curious tricks, which seemed to exhibit something far beyond

instinct. Among other things, it cleared six poles, one after the other, at a distance of not more than four feet between.

"After it had done this, it went limping up to its master, as if to say, 'See; I can do no more to-night.'

"The master lifted the lame foot, searching for the cause of the halt, but in vain. Still, however, the horse goes on limping. The man then looked it in the

face, and shook his head, as if he would say, 'Ah, you are shamming, you rogue; are n't you?'

"And a sham it proved to be; for, with a touch of the whip, the creature bounded away like a fawn, sound both in wind and limb."

"I wish I could see that horse," cried Minnie, laughing.

"The most remarkable instance of docility," added the lady, "was Bank's famous horse, Morocco.

"This animal would restore a glove to its owner, after his master had whispered the man's name in his ear; and he could also tell the number of pence in any silver coin. Morocco danced to the sound of a pipe, and counted money with his feet."

"O, mamma, wasn't that strange? I wonder whether I could teach Star to do any funny things!"

"Kindness and perseverance

will effect a great deal, my dear," answered the lady, enjoying her little daughter's delight. "I have heard of a little farm boy, who was too small to mount the plough horses, he was required to ride, who taught one of them to put down its head to the ground, while he jumped astride on its neck, and then, by gently elevating the head, let him slip backward into his seat on its back.

"The intelligent creature appeared perfectly to understand the wishes of the boy, and the use of lowering its head for the purpose of his mounting.

"Perhaps you can teach Star to pump his own water, as a gentleman in Leeds found his horse doing. The animal had been kept in a stable for a long time, but was at last turned into a field, where there was a pump, well supplied with water.

"One day, being thirsty, I suppose, a man saw him go to the pump, and, taking the handle in his mouth, work it with his head, in a way exactly similar to that done by the hand of a man, until he had secured a supply."

"It does seem as if they were guided by reason," remarked Mrs. Harry Lee, who had entered the room in time to hear the last anecdote.

"Certainly," returned her sis-

ter; "their intelligence and sagacity place them in the highest rank among the brute creation. I have been myself surprised in reading these accounts of their attachment to man, and to each other; their courage, faithfulness, and devotion to the interests of their owner; and I wish every man, woman, and child, who has any thing to do with these noble creatures, would study their history, so as to treat them with the

kindness and care they deserve. I have heard my husband say, that even in a wild state, all their movements are so intelligent, that it seems as if it must be the result of reason. When the herds wish to change from one vast plain to another, they choose leaders, and place sentinels along the line of march, thus recognizing the necessity of obedience and order.

"Then, the readiness with

which they communicate to each other when they have discovered water or fresh pasturage, the adroitness with which, by their responsive neighings, they express alarm, terror, or pleasure, are equally wonderful.

"When they pass through a swamp, they test it with the fore foot before they trust the weight of their whole bodies upon it; and they often scoop out a hollow place in the sand, expecting

it will fill with water. Even the little Shetland pony, in going through the bogs, puts its nose to the ground, then pats it with the fore foot, judging from the feeling of the ground whether it will bear him."

CHAPTER VII.

THE ARABIAN HORSE.

"Now, father, I'm ready to hear about the Arab and his horse," cried Minnie, one day, when, after following the gentleman about the grounds for nearly an hour, they at length returned to the library.

Mr. Lee, with an arch glance at his wife, arose at once, and, taking a large book from the

shelves, opened to a chapter on Arabian horses.

"I will first read you a description, my dear, of the animal, before I repeat to you the anecdote to which you refer.

"The celebrated horse of Arabia is of the smaller class of these animals, very little exceeding fifty-six inches in height. As compared with the horses of countries abounding in the grasses, their aspect is lean,

their form slender, and their chest narrow. But this slimness of figure is not inconsistent with muscular force. Their movements are agile, their natural paces swift, and their spirit is unmatched.

"Bishop Heber, while travelling through the upper part of India, gives a more correct notion of the Arab than the more labored descriptions of others.

"My morning rides are very

pleasant. My horse is a nice, quiet, good-tempered little Arab, who is so fearless that he goes, without starting, close to an elephant, and is so gentle and docile, that he eats bread out of my hand, and has almost as much attachment and coaxing ways as a dog.

"The temper of these beautiful horses is no less happily moulded than their bodily powers to their condition. They are

gentle, patient, and attached to their rude and simple protectors. This, indeed, is greatly the effect of training; for the same animals, under the charge of Europeans, frequently manifest a vicious and indomitable temper. But the Arab treats his horse as a companion, never beats him, but cheers him with his voice, and only uses him with seeming cruelty in necessary demands on his physical powers.

"In the desert, the mare of the Bedouin, and her foal, inhabit the same tent as himself and his children. She is the friend and playmate of the little household. The neck of the mare is often the pillow of the rider, and more frequently of the children, who are rolling about upon her and the foal; yet no accident occurs, and she acquires a friendship and love for man which occasional ill-treat-

ment will not cause her for a moment to forget.

"She is obedient to her master's voice, and will neigh when she hears his footsteps. Without a bit, she will obey the slightest motion of the rider, stand at a word, or put herself to speed in an instant.

"These horses subsist on the scantiest fare, on which the English horses would perish, and are patient of hunger and thirst in a

degree unknown in any other races except the African. They feed on the scanty plants which the borders of the desert supply, and when these are wanting, they are fed on a little barley, with chopped straw, withered herbs, roots dragged from the sand, dates, when they can be obtained, and, in cases of need, the milk of the camel. They drink at long intervals, and in moderate quantities. They bear

continued exposure to the fiercest heat, and, day after day, pursue marches of incredible toil through the burning sands of the wilderness.

"The mare usually has but one or two meals in twenty-four hours. During the day, she is tied to the door of the tent, ready for the Bedouin to spring, at a moment's warning, into the saddle; or she is turned out before the tent ready saddled, the

bridle merely taken off, and so trained that she gallops up immediately upon hearing the call of her master.

"At night, she receives a little water, and with her scanty provender of five or six pounds of barley or beans, and sometimes a little straw, she lies down content in the midst of her master's family. She can, however, endure great fatigue. She will travel fifty miles without stop-

ping, and on an emergency, one hundred and twenty; and occasionally neither she nor her rider has tasted food for three whole days."

"O, father, how dreadful! I should think she would sink down and die."

"No doubt, my dear, both she and her master endured much suffering. But notwithstanding the Arab lives with, and loves his horse beyond any other

treasure, the young filly, when about to be trained, is treated with a cruelty scarcely to be believed. Take one who has never before been mounted. She is led out, her owner springs on her back, and goads her over the sand and rocks of the desert at full speed for sixty miles, without one moment's respite. She is then forced, steaming and panting, into water deep enough for her to swim. If, immediately

after this, she will eat as if nothing had occurred, her character is well established forever afterwards.

"The master does not seem to be conscious of the cruelty which he thus inflicts. It is the custom of the country, and custom will induce us to inflict many a pang on those whom, after all, we love."

Minnie sighed.

"I remember," added her fa-

ther, affectionately patting her head, "an anecdote which proves the strong affection of the Arabian horse for home and friends.

"One of these animals was taken by the Persians in an attack made by an Arab tribe on a party of the royal family of Persia. The chief heading the party was killed, and his horse, running into the Persian lines, was taken. A ransom — enormous for so poor a tribe — was

offered by the Arabs for their noble charger, but refused; and he was taken to England by Sir John McNeil, who was at that time the British resident at the court of Persia.

"When his portrait was being painted, he was languid, from the cold of the weather. It was desired to arouse him a little, and the idea occurred of trying the effect of some tones of simple music.

"The sounds no sooner struck his ear, than his whole frame was agitated; his heart throbbed so violently that its beating could be seen; and so great was his excitement, that it was necessary instantly to stop the music. Some chord of feeling had been struck; perchance he was reminded, for a moment, of his desert home, and of the friends from whom he had been so rudely severed."

"O, father," said Minnie, with glistening eyes, "I wish I could see that horse. I would be ever so kind to him. Please tell another story as good as that; can't you?"

"When the Arab falls from his mare, and is unable to rise," the gentleman went on, "she will stand by his side and neigh till assistance arrives. If he lies down to sleep in the midst of the desert, she stands watchful

over him, — her body being the only shield between him and the fierce rays of the sun, — and neighs to rouse him, if man or beast approaches during his slumbers.

"There was once an old Arab who had a valuable mare, that had carried him for fifteen years in many a hard-fought battle, and many a rapid, weary march. At last, when eighty years old, and unable longer to ride her, he

gave her, and a cimeter that had been his father's, to his eldest son, and told him to appreciate their value, and never lie down to rest until he had rubbed them both as bright as a looking-glass.

"In the first skirmish in which the young man was engaged he was killed, and the mare fell into the hands of the enemy. When the news reached the old man, he exclaimed, 'Life is no longer

worth preserving. I have lost my son and my mare. I grieve as much for the one as the other.' After this, he sickened and died."

"How much the old man did love him!" said Minnie, thoughtfully. "Is that the story you promised me?"

"No, dear," said Mr. Lee, looking at his watch; "but I must tell you at once, for I have an engagement soon."

"There was a poor Arab in

the desert — so poor that he had nothing but his mare. The French consul saw her, and offered to purchase her, in order to send her to his sovereign, Louis XIV. The Arab would have rejected the proposal at once with indignation and scorn, but for his poverty. He had no means of supplying his most urgent wants, or procuring the barest necessaries of life. Still he hesitated. He had scarcely

a rag to cover him; his wife and children were starving. The sum offered was great — it would be sufficient for his whole life.

"At length, and reluctantly, he consented to the sacrifice. He brought the mare to the dwelling of the consul; he dismounted; he stood leaning upon her; he looked now at the gold, and then at his favorite, while large tears rolled down his swarthy cheek. He sighed repeat-

edly, and at length exclaimed, 'To whom is it I am going to yield thee up? To Europeans, who will tie thee close, who will beat thee, who will render thee miserable? Return with me, my beauty, my jewel, and rejoice the hearts of my children.'

"As he pronounced the last words, he sprang upon her back, and was out of sight in a moment."

Minnie laughed and clapped

her hands, though tears of sympathy with the poor Arab were running down her cheeks.

"O, father!" she cried, "how glad, how very glad I am! I think, too, that the French consul, when he saw how the man loved his mare, should have given him money to buy his children food and clothes. I'm sure you would have done so."

Mr. Lee smiled, and thanked God for the child's loving heart.

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